

THE CYNICK.

BY GROWLER GRUFF, ESQUIRE,

*AIDED BY A CONFEDERACY OF
LETTERED DOGS.*

"We'll snarl, and bite, and play the dog,"

— "For dogs are honest."

Vol. I.

Saturday, November 23, 1811.

No. IX.

*Gargulus hunc quando consumet cunque : loquaces,
Si sapiat, vitet, simul atque adoleverit atas.* HOR.

As I passed by the house of a friend some time since, my esteem for an old acquaintance overcame my repugnance to visiting; and I mounted the marble steps. I raised the sounding brass, and heard with regret the reverberations of the noise, travelling through the long entry, without any effect. I essayed the knocker again and again, and heard only the answers of the noisy nymph,

*Quæ nec reticere ne loquenti,
Nec prior ipsa loqui didicit resonabilis echo.*

After repeated knockings and as many ringings of the bell, I at last heard a footstep, but was exceedingly surprised, when the door opened to discover my old friend

himself, in a violent perspiration, shivering from top to toe, and with every appearance of a sudden convulsion. This apprehension was not lessened, when he seized me by the hand with a cold grasp, and grinning horribly a ghastly smile, bade me welcome. I at first retreated, but on second thoughts, followed him in, and was seated in a moment before a comfortable fire. In another minute candles were brought and placed on the table, which I observed, besides the usual tea equipage, was loaded with wine, brandy, laudanum, newspapers, assa-fœtida, books, a round of beef, and several other articles of a similar description. While I was wondering at this strange assemblage, I observed my friend to be intently examining me, from a corner of his eye which at intervals was ludicrously averted, and his face was overspread with a strange appearance of comick grief. I must confess my astonishment had heretofore kept me silent, but I now had acquired self possession sufficient to ask him how he was and to inquire after his family. No sooner had I done this than he started up in the greatest transport, seized both my hands and vociferated with oaths which I had not before heard him use, "that he was, damned heartily glad to see me;" and indeed he seemed to be completely overcome with joy. By this time I concluded the poor man was actually deranged, and was about running from the house, when his good wife opened the door and peeping in two or three times, at last entered, and ordering the table to be cleared, seated herself, and gave us according to her custom, an excellent dish of tea. During this agreeable repast, he told me that he observed my surprise at what I saw, and he would

refer me to his lady for an explanation, who was more willing and able to gratify my curiosity than himself, who formerly somewhat fluent, had latterly taken a dislike to any violent exercise of the tongue. But said he, my dear, be brief, be brief, and take care not to exemplify Johnny.

The lady, laughing, promised not to sermonise, and then entertained me with the explanation of these singular circumstances, the substance of which I will endeavour to write for the use of all persons in the same dreadful predicament as this most worthy family.

It seems this Johnny, who was on no account to be imitated, was John Jaundice, Esq. a relation of the family whose principal excellence consisted in simpering, smiling vanity, and whose principal defect consisted in the disproportion of his tongue to the rest of his body. This indeed, if such things were estimated in society, might have been greatly valued; and master Johnny might have been as much in demand in a spouting club, as a notorious friend of Eliogabalus was in the town of Rome, and in some respects for the same cause; viz. *propter enormitatem membri*—though with this difference that one was a preserving the other a destroying engine. Thus gifted by nature, Master Johnny visited his friends, and rattled his vocabulary instruments so intensely about their ears, that at first they judged him a wonder—next a singularity—then a monster—and last a nuisance. Of course the clatter-box was discarded from society, and his presence is tolerated now only by his relations and family, who curse from the bottom of their hearts, the necessity of his presence, and daily offer up their prayers

for a safe delivery from the articulating uproar of this chattering pest. But, as like the children of Israel, they look in vain for a deliverance, they are necessitated to guard against him by a variety of supplemented shifts—such as stuffing cotton in their ears, reading newspapers &c. &c. which however prove but a weak guard against the inroads of his shrill voice:

So extraordinary are his qualifications in this way, that his family suppose it would be a profitable scheme to exhibit him as a talker, before the publick, if indeed, they could hope any audience to stay during the whole of his exhibition, which would necessarily be very—very long—perhaps even longer than Mr. Walsh's political essays, or any of the sermons in any of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth or seventh presbyterian meeting-houses—yea, even longer than the high-street market—longer than the Strasburger's nose, or Longum's legs—longer than Timothy Pickering's lengthy letters, or than Citizen Genet's somewhat long replies.

They have also in consideration, a proposal to congress of taxing the doctors and druggists, and substituting Johnny in their place, because they think he can talk more people to death—sudden or consumptive, as may be desired, in less time than either the graduated empiricks themselves, or that prince of practical imposture, and quizzical quackery, Bolus the Doctor. So sure is he himself of his abilities that he undertakes frequently to talk ladies and gentlemen into convulsions of indignation and hystericks of disgust, by merely speaking in his natural manner, which immediately leads him into passion or folly. 'Tis said, indeed, that he has ac-

tually talked to death three ladies, one of whom died while he was in the act of making love to her in accents of fury, and the words of Roxana concerning Alexander, sweetly fell from her expiring lips :

*O ! then he talks,
Good God ! how he can talk !*

The other ladies were talked to death on matters of business, while he was endeavouring to explain to them in a speech of nine hours, nine minutes, and nine seconds (the only leisure moments he had) his conduct admirable indeed ! in a transaction which one of the ladies denominated swindling—much to his uneasiness, as he was concerned in it from having once seen one of the actors at a distance, through a reflecting four foot telescope, made in the first style, by Jones of London.

In this manner he frequently relates anecdotes of great persons whom he knew—and of transactions with which he was conversant ; of Adams his particular friend, whom he once saw through the window of his house in Market-street—of Dr. Franklin his professed intimate, whose burial he himself saw with his own eyes when he was a boy, and of several late worthies, fashionable, literary, learned, political and ephemeral.

It may readily be imagined that such a monstrous conversationalist, must have an inexhaustible fund of information ; and such indeed he has collected from magazines and reviews, and newspapers, and encyclopædias, and his own imagination, to such a degree, that he can talk to a sweep of chimneys—to a cook of cutlets—to a

chemist of chemistry—to a politician of politicks : while all'around who know nothing of the matter, are astonished at the volubility of his tongue ; while the sweep, cook, chemist and politician, are also astonished at the folly and fact, the notions and nonsense of the talkative Jack of all trades, who

*Every subject knows and talks of it,
In all conversant and for all unfit.*

Another fertile source of prattle with him is the result of circumstances, for as he speaks with those who never mind him, of course he meets with no contradiction, and therefore, fearing no exposure, he invents for the occasion, and at every dinner or tea-party, proves himself an accomplished liar.

Good nature makes amends for many mistakes, but this does not apply to Johnny. Nothing good natured seems about him. His favourite dish is scandal, and nothing gives him more pleasure than to talk perpetually on the frailties of his neighbours, which he is the first to discover, and frequently to invent. He is a whig, and he abuses the tories ; he is a tory, and he abuses the whigs ; he is a christian, and he abuses the pagans ; he is an atheist, and he abuses the christians ; he is a bachelor, and he abuses married people ; he wants to be married, and he abuses old maids and bachelors.

His desire of connubial bliss is unquestionable ; for some time since he made a dead set at an elderly lady in a long talk of several hours ; but she finding no interval for the exercise of her oratorical powers, thought the privilege of the sex insulted, and swore she would

live to stop the propagation of mankind, and die to *lead apes in hell*, rather than wed with such a wordy wonder.

The principle secret of his fluency consists in an abundance of truisms. He has absolutely gleaned the admiration of a whole company by a positive assertion that the sun rose in the morning and will set in the evening, and by proving it in a long speech to the perfect and indubitable satisfaction of all present. But there is another source, private knowledge which nobody else knows. He knows for certain that Bonaparte is a coward—that the British legislature is vulgar, low and illiberal; and that president Madison hates the congress, and intends to change the form of government, but that he conceals his intentions from motives of prudence.

He is extremely fond of an argument; and as his method of analysis is both uncommon and facile, it deserves to be remembered. It runs principally on the argumentum ad hominem—the argumentum ab invidia—and the argumentum ad ignorantiam; but sometimes his reasoning is perfectly unclassifiable. He loves the bank for example, and holds the president to be a monarch, and the clerks nobles; but he proves it by saying, you deny it, do you? that only shows the obliquity of your mind—and then he pours forth a torrent of words, accompanied with gestures since Mr. Ogilvie was here, with metaphors and figures in imitation of Mr. Ogilvie—and at last overpowers his audience by the mere force of rhetoric.

Dat inania verba dat sine mente sonum.

He is besides an astronomer, and takes particular delight in proving the sun a lump of ice, or more cor-

rectly, an immense coagulated snow-ball; and if perhaps his antagonist doubts the intelligence, he begins his demonstration by observing, sir, that's like you—you are a fool, and know nothing of this—but the world know me, sir—the people of intelligence—the intelligence of the nation, sir—attend to what I say—and sir, the intelligence of the nation ought to command the low blackguards—and you too if you knew what was good for you—you ignorant ass—you—

*You thread, you needle, half yard, quarter ell,
Fleec'd in mine own house with a skein of thread.*

It cannot be surprising, if, with all these qualifications, Johnny should have received a frequency of floggings: he, however, avoids it by great obsequiousness, and by many apologies, but particularly by cultivating female acquaintances only, and going among his relations who pity him. It has so happened, though, that he has not completely escaped several *shoulder-dressings*, but then his faculty of lying, always makes him more than a conqueror. It is not long since that being knocked down for his impertinence, he commenced hugging and biting the knees of his adversary, so as at last to overturn him; and the bystanders just then interfering, he smiled complacently at his prowess, and proclaimed every where that he had been *sine clade victor*.

I scarcely need mention, that the visits of master Johnny, are very unacceptable, and from some presentment or information, my old friend was in great fears of seeing him that night. My knock was mistaken for his; and thence all the preparation and trepidation I

have already described. The servants were afraid to meet him at the door. The good lady was indisposed for company by a severe headache. My old friend was to bear the brunt of the conversation—and for this purpose all these things were prepared to entice master Johnny to eat—while my friend read or slept. Such was his terror of the talker, that he feared to look at him—and never was a voice more acceptable to his ears, than the substitution of mine for his cousin's. It was in comparison he said,

*Sweeter than the southern gale
Stealing upon a bank of violets.*

Such are the horrors of loquacity! Such the truth of holy writ—"The tongue is more destructive than the sword!" Such the correctness of the Grecian proverb—"the tongue is like a race horse, the less weight it carries, the more rapidly it runs." Such the estimation of an immoderate and ignorant babbler. G. G.

DIALOGUE OF THE DEAD AND LIVING.

*Rhadamanthus habet durissima regna castigatque
auditque.*

*Rhadamanthus—Tom Paine—St. Peter—the Devil—and
John Randolph.*

Rhadamanthus. Well, gentlemen, you see I have attended to hear your complaints. Mr. Devil, you are the prosecutor—what do you complain of, and whom do you accuse?

The Devil. Rhadamanthus, you shall judge whether I have not sufficient cause of complaint, when you hear the ingratitude and ill treatment I have experienced, not from one, but from all these gentlemen before you. To begin with my dear friend Mr. Randolph.

John Randolph. Mr. Speaker—Sir—The privileges of this house are not to be insulted. I should have called the gentleman to order before, but that—sir—personalities—sir, personalities—are not to be indulged.

Rhadamanthus. Mr. Randolph, you forget yourself—you are now in the court of Rhadamanthus, where substantial justice is pursued and forms disregarded. You, sir, should be the last to complain of infringements on decency and privilege—and certainly not the first to complain of personalities; nor do I observe in the Devil's opening, any *mammoth* breach of order. Mr. Devil, go on.

John Randolph. I will be heard, sir. Shall you shut, like Napoleon, the ports of my wisdom? Shall you embargo my eloquence? Shall you close my mouth by open or by secret influence? No, "hear me, for I will speak."

Rhadamanthus. You shall be heard in your turn—but be not so obstreperous—whatever you are suffered to do in the hall at Washington, know, sir, that here, we neither accuse nor condemn any person unheard, nor calumniate any man who, from age, death, or distance, is unable to defend himself—and know, sir, that here you are not privileged—we make no distinction between *Thomas* or *John*. Be silent, sir, or you shall be made like that Tantalus there at the river, to grasp at an object you shall never attain. Mr. Devil, we will hear you.

The Devil. I accuse my dear friend John, (who is very sociable with me in private, whatever he may pretend before this court), in the first place of ingratitude, because that whereas by our articles of agreement entered into some years since, he engaged to be my underling and assistant, which not regarding, he in the congress hall—1, treated me with disrespect as a perfect stranger—2, undertook to mimick my majesty in his puny form—and 3, absolutely usurped my part in chief, and before the American legislature, began to *play the devil*. In the second place, I accuse him of defamation, because knowing the contrary, he insinuates a friendly connexion between Mr. Paine and myself, which I totally disclaim; and he affirms, an old representative from Pennsylvania and others to be my disciples, when he knew them from my own information, to be my worst enemies and greatest opposers; the old gentleman he knew was always in the service of my adversaries. And he knows that I have no intimate friends or servants in either house, except the honourable gentleman himself in one, and a certain doctor from the district of Philadelphia in the other; for I think one agent in each is sufficient, and these fellows are very troublesome and expensive to me.

Rhadamanthus. What say you, sir, to these assertions, will you make a defence? if you do, I pray you remember, this is not a logocracy—be brief, sir.

John Randolph. Nay, if the honourable gentleman from Pandemonium, will display our family secrets, what can I say? do I deny it? no, sir. What then is my defence? I intended to serve him—how? by dissimula-

tion, by concealing our friendship, by positively asserting on the floor, that two and two would not make four? does the gentleman suppose I wanted to cozen the Devil? could he forget our plighted vows? could he forget our former habits? could he forget our nocturnal collusions? could he forget the back stairs? false world! ungrateful world! but, sir, 'tis very evident; the hand of Napoleon is in this business. "I see a hand by you unseen; I hear a bell that you can't hear." That hand points at me—that hand is just on the corner of my pocket hole—that iron cold grasp is just on my collar. But he shan't succeed. Is it come to this? "sweat till your proud heart aches." I fear no disciple of Tom Paine or a foreigner. They are deists—they are free-thinkers—they are hereticks—they are modern philosophers. I will put on the cassock and the surplice. I will seize the mitre and the crook, and I will watch the Merino sheep of Israel.

The Devil. Nay, my good friend, you can't be serious. You are not certainly *under a call*. Nay, 'egad, if you absolutely take to the pulpit, I've done with—but it can't be—my good friend a methodist parson?—Impossible! John Randolph—the Lord's anointed!

St. Peter. I'll swear, "No Lord's anointed, but a Russian bear."

Rhadamanthus. Come! come! gentlemen, order!—Silence in the court! whom else do you charge, Mr. Devil?

The Devil. Tom Paine, sir. When he was in France, he was introduced to my acquaintance. I fancied him able, warm hearted, brave and zealous; undaunted, undisguised, and permit me to say, unthinking in sup-

port of what he conceived to be rectitude and truth. Fearless in the cause of the rights of man, his confidence in the blessings of liberty, and perhaps a speck of pride in the aid he had afforded it, blinded his intellect to the depraved condition of the ruinous human system. Judging merely from what human reason had done, he was misled in his opinion, of what it was able to do. I saw his error. I need not say, sir, to you who know me, that I took advantage of it. Mr. Paine grew old. I took him under my protection, and plied him with wine, and as you know, the authority by which I reign on earth, I deluded him, with a notion, that he was pursuing the cause of truth, when he composed his Age of Reason and with a notion of duty to mankind when he published. Now, sir, as soon as Mr. Paine left his prison of clay, which began to grow unhealthy from its vinous moisture, and as soon as the terrestrial film was cleared from his eyes, I led him into my drying oven, and put him over a hot bed of coals, and placed before him a nice tankard of sulphurous acid; but looking around him, he rose immediately, and laughing pleasantly enough, told me to my face, sir, that I was a great scoundrel, and had deceived him, for which he would leave my service. I endeavoured to catch him, but in vain; for that rogue, St. Peter, caught him up and lodged him in a house of correction, which I think he calls purgatory, where he intends Tom shall only remain till such time as he is clarified. And I accuse St. Peter of keeping him from me.

John Randolph. My client, sir, his satannick majesty, wishes to have restored to his possession, the body of

this English staymaker. Now, sir, there are two methods—one, the writ *de homine replegiando*, which I thought of having awarded when I was prize to a military ruffian, under the administration of old John Adams; the other, the great writ of *habeas corpus*, which was audaciously trampled upon in the case of Aaron Burr, Esquire, under the administration of Thomas Jefferson. But, sir, the hand of Napoleon——

Rhadamanthus. Silence, sir, let us proceed, we make no speeches at our bar. Mr. Paine what have you to answer.

Tom Paine. I have nothing to say. He only who knows the heart, has the right to punish it. I was a man. I strayed. I was a mortal. I was deluded. I did much harm thinking that I was doing some good. I have served my country. I have served mankind. Had I served my God as I served them, I should now be happy. I have fallen. I have erred. I have sinned. Who has not? I will not add to my faults the temerity of touching with unhallowed hands, that volume I have already abused. But—you know it abounds with the spirit of mercy that is not found among men.

*What though this hand be red with brother's blood,
Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens
To wash it white as snow?*

Rhadamanthus. Well! St. Peter, will you deliver this man into the hands of the devil, who claims him so earnestly?

St. Peter. No, Sir. The devil reigns on earth, and his friends may help him there. But here, sir, the

gentleman has no power. I will keep this sinner, and I hope to make something of him. That, however, is a secret—who knows? I will only remind that gentleman (who is, as I suppose, from his conversation, an orator,) of what a very pretty poet has said in his language,

*Let not this weak presumptuous hand,
Presume thy bolts to throw,
Or deal damnation round the land,
On each I judge thy foe.*

And another,

For British valour wars not with the dead.

And now he may go and make laws. But his must be a singular kind of a nation, or what shall I call it, whose legislators are the first to laugh at their laws, and where men are sent to govern others who are unable to govern themselves. Moreover, they call it a republick, which must stand on virtue if it stands at all, and yet publick virtue seems in no estimation. In Greece and Rome the greatest respect was paid to illustrious age, but in this commonwealth, old age seems only a mark of scorn, and its beard seems to become hoary only to be pulled by some unfledged politician, or some boylike demagogue. Were I the constitution maker of this republick, I would put these legislators in earthen pots up to their chins in cold water, according to the custom in Africa; then perhaps publick business might be expedited and people might rest in their long homes in peace and quietness.

John Randolph. Sir, the privileges of the house. If you will give me leave, I will speak a word with Mr.

Devil, and I hope we shall be able to settle our affairs. He will not perhaps like to burst from me in anger, and I am sure I shall easily be reconciled. Hear! Mr. Devil. I assure you sir, you have entirely misunderstood me. Only look at my speeches,—Do you really think I intend to preach.

The Devil. O! my dear fellow, I am perfectly satisfied; give me your hand. Nay! buss me—That's right now, cheek by jowl. We are friends again.

Rhadamanthus. Well, gentlemen! have you agreed? You scarcely need answer. I see you hugging each other. Mr. Mercury, open that sky-light, and conduct these gentlemen, St. Peter and Tom Paine through—observe that you carry them safely and pleasantly, they are both people of consideration, and my particular friends. Come, Mr. Devil, you and your friend must march this way, hallo! Cerberus, you cynical rascal you, let these two fellows safely by. Growl at your peril. Go, gentlemen, don't be alarmed; if my watch-dog barks, bark back again—never fear—your humble servant, good morning.

*Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
Nature has made them so.*

DR. WATTS.

ODE IV.

DANCING.

Now the southern sun descending,
Leaves the world to winter's sway;
Glooms with bright-eyed pleasure blending,
Winters night outvies the day;
Gay delight its clouds attending,
Beams around a purer ray.

Chief of pleasure's brilliant clustre,
— See a sparkling nymph advance,
Sylph-like form and eyes of lustre
Speak the goddess of the dance;
Guardian Cupids round adjust her,
AURIOL leads the nymph from France.

Haste! young virgins, haste! address her,
Join with pleasure's blooming train;
Age nor prudence now oppress her,
None can say her joys are vain;
They will have, who once possess her,
Health and pleasure free from pain.

Taste and exercise combining,
Give the nymph a roseate bloom;
Limbs of heav'nly form while twining
All their beauteous strength resume;
Love-born gestures undesigning
Point the distant bridal room.

Nature's fires the bosom swelling,
Spurn the corset's cruel tie;
Manly arms, her waist compelling,
Sure would draw a sweeter sigh.
Clasp then youths! fear no repelling,
Clasp the maid and tell her why.

Kisses on her lips while glowing
Print with love's delicious fire,
Arms around her shoulders throwing,
Whisper flames of chaste desire;
Drink the wave of love while flowing—
Drink before its raptures tire.

See delirious pleasure heaving
Burning orbs that once were snow;
Scarce the rosy blush perceiving,
See her rise on radiant toe;
Now her robes their coyness leaving
All her angel beauties show.

Such the joys the dance affording,
Gilds with pleasure winter's night;
Health and taste and love rewarding
Beauty's power and graces bright;
Love-lighted smiles, our maidens hoarding,
Keep to charm a husband's sight.

AURIOL! thee, the mother blesses,
When she sees her daughter's form,
Worthy the noblest youth's caresses,
Rise with native graces warm,
And her anxious fears represses,
Foolish fears! of nuptial storm.